

Appl. No. 10/716,350
Amdt. dated January 18, 2005
Reply to Office Action of November 30, 2004

Amendments to the Claims:

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

Listing of Claims:

1. (currently amended) A package comprising:
 - a) an enclosed compartment having a pair of oppositely aligned walls and a perimeter;
 - b) an array of compressible articles retained in said enclosed compartment in an initial orientation, said articles having at least one planar surface aligned substantially parallel to at least one of said pair of oppositely aligned walls and being held in compression in a direction that is substantially perpendicular to said planar surface;
 - c) an opening mechanism capable of being activated to provide an opening into said enclosed compartment, said opening being of sufficient size to allow said articles to be individually removed; and
 - d) an expansion member secured to said enclosed compartment and capable of expanding outward through said opening, said expansion member permitting removal of said articles from said opened package while retaining said remaining articles in said initial orientation;
 - e) a removable wrapper enclosing said package; and
 - f) instructions placed between said package and said wrapper for informing a consumer on how to activate said opening mechanism to facilitate removal of said articles from said package.
2. (Original) The package of claim 1 wherein said opening mechanism includes at least one frangible line.
3. (Original) The package of claim 1 wherein said opening mechanism includes at least two intersecting frangible lines.
4. (Original) The package of claim 1 wherein said opening mechanism is formed in one of said pair of oppositely aligned walls.

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5. (Original) The package of claim 1 wherein said opening is aligned adjacent to one of said planar surfaces of said articles.
6. (Original) The package of claim 1 having a front wall and a back wall and said expansion member is secured to an inner surface of said front and back walls.
7. (Original) The package of claim 6 wherein said expansion member is formed from a material that is different from the material that forms said front and back walls.
8. (Original) The package of claim 1 wherein said expansion member is formed from a material that can stretch and retract.
9. (Original) The package of claim 8 wherein said expansion member is capable of stretching in more than one direction.
10. (currently amended) A package comprising:
 - a) an enclosed compartment having a pair of oppositely aligned walls and a perimeter;
 - b) an array of compressible articles retained in said enclosed compartment in an initial orientation, said articles having at least one planar surface aligned substantially parallel to at least one of said pair of oppositely aligned walls and being held in compression in a direction that is substantially perpendicular to said planar surface;
 - c) an opening mechanism capable of being activated to provide an opening into said enclosed compartment, said opening being of sufficient size to allow said articles to be individually removed; and
 - d) an expansion member secured to an inner surface of said enclosed compartment and capable of expanding outward through said opening, said expansion member permitting removal of said articles from said opened package while retaining said remaining articles in said initial orientation;
 - e) a removable wrapper enclosing said package; and

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f) instructions placed between said package and said wrapper for informing a consumer on how to activate said opening mechanism to facilitate removal of said articles from said package.

11. (Original) The package of claim 10 wherein said opening mechanism is formed in two adjacent walls.
12. (Original) The package of claim 10 wherein said expansion member is formed from a stretchable material.
13. (Original) The package of claim 12 wherein said expansion member can stretch from between about 50% to about 1,000%.
14. (Original) The package of claim 13 wherein said expansion member can stretch from between about 75% to about 500%.
15. (Original) The package of claim 10 wherein each of said articles has a bottom surface and said expansion member surrounds at least a portion of said bottom surface once said articles have moved through said opening.
16. (currently amended) A package comprising:
 - a) a front wall and a back wall joined to one another by a pair of side walls, and a top wall and a bottom wall joined to said other walls to form an enclosed compartment having a perimeter;
 - b) an array of compressible articles housed in said enclosed compartment in an initial orientation, said articles having at least one planar surface aligned parallel to at least one of said pair of side walls and said articles being held in compression in a direction that is substantially perpendicular to said planar surface;
 - c) an opening mechanism capable of being activated to provide an opening into said enclosed compartment, said opening being of sufficient size to allow said articles to be individually removed; and

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d) an expansion member secured to an inner surface of said enclosed compartment and capable of expanding outward through said opening, said expansion member permitting removal of said articles from said opened package while retaining said remaining articles in said initial orientation;

e) a removable wrapper enclosing said package; and

f) instructions placed between said package and said wrapper for informing a consumer on how to activate said opening mechanism to facilitate removal of said articles from said package.

17. (Original) The package of claim 16 wherein said array of compressible articles includes at least six articles.

18. (Original) The package of claim 16 wherein said walls forming said package are formed from a flexible material and said expansion member is formed from a stretchable material.

19. (Original) The package of claim 16 wherein said expansion member is formed from synthetic rubber.

20. (Original) The package of claim 16 wherein said expansion member is formed from synthetic latex.

21. (currently amended) The package of claim 16 wherein said wrapper is clear ~~instructions are included on said package for informing a consumer on how to activate said opening mechanism to facilitate removal of said articles from said package.~~

22. (currently amended) The package of claim 16 wherein said package is enclosed by a removable wrapper and instructions are placed between said package and said wrapper for informing a consumer on how to activate said opening mechanism to facilitate removal of said articles from said package is clear.

23. (currently amended) The package of claim 22 16 wherein said wrapper is clear.